1-20-15

THE COURT:

I plan to attend the Hearing on Jan 29-15 at 9:30 AM.

If it is not too late I would be available to be a speaker

Thanks,
Ken Dibbell

Dairy History

In 1940 this nation had 4.66 million dairy production operations. My grandfather in Stowe Vermont was one of those operations milking 12 cows by lantern light and separating each milking and collecting the cream. Skim went to the pigs. If I was present I got to turn the crank of the separator.

Gramp spent the whole day Saturday in the basement of the house (which had electricity) churning the best butter you ever ate. Monday morning he would load up his 1937 Chevy pick-up with butter, brown eggs, maple syrup (at $6 per gallon), and proceed to Morrisville, VT and visit his regular customers and return to the farm at about 4pm most everything sold.

Tuesday am he would load up a little less and visit Stowe village, a bit smaller then than now. At 2pm every Tuesday he would enter the barber shop (the chair would be empty) for his weekly shave with a straight razor. This system went well all through World War II.

After the war Gramp added on to the barn and milked up to 25 head with De Laval pail milkers. Delivered the milk in cans to the local creamery with that 37 Chevy.

Then came the 1950s and the bulk tank and Gramp's farm ceased operation. Farm numbers continued to shrink yearly.

Fast forward to 1979, prior to President Carter the USDA administered a price to the farmers at 80% of parity. The industry lobby convinced President Carter to reduce parity to 75%. Good managers made it through the seventies even though it was a struggle.

Then came Ronald Reagan. It was his decision to eliminate the parity pricing system in 1981 and install a market oriented pricing system based on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. The USDA and Congress created several so-called safety nets to keep dairy famers farming none of which (at taxpayer expense) paid the producer enough to cover his cost of production.

With ethanol driving up the price of corn for grain and fluid energy prices spiraling upward and escalating steel and other prices it became pretty difficult to make ends meet.

In In 1979 dairy operations in this nation had dropped to 349,470 and today, fewer than 49,000 remain in operation in the nation today.

Since 1981 with the so-called market oriented pricing philosophy, in excess of 300,000 producers have failed leaving fewer than 49,000 in the nation.

The most recent safety net (MILC) paid about 20% of the deficiency versus cost of production as calculated by the Economic Research Section of the USDA . USDA Ag. Marketing Service continues to administer this faulted and failed pricing formula.

March 28, 2013

Celebrating Agriculture

I don't mean to throw cold water on last week's annual celebration of agriculture in Chenango County, but I do not have any "warm" water.

I started dairy farming in Chenango County on November 1, 1976. I grew up on different dairy farms in Vermont and worked on the same farm for 3 years when in high school therefore I had plenty of exposure to the dairy virus. I came to Chenango County from New Jersey, having stopped there for 23 years on the way from Vermont, and working in the real world. What was I thinking?

On my arrival in Chenango County there were 733 licensed dairy producers . Now there are maybe 170. On my arrival in South New Berlin in November 1976 gasoline was 51.9 cents, at the Agway pump in South New Berlin and diesel fuel and heating oil were 42 cents per gallon. Crude oil was 20-22 per barrel and now 95 plus or minus dollars per barrel thank you OPEC!

Who is responsible for the decline in dairy producers in Chenango County? It is a combination of factors including the inept continued administration of a failed and flawed farm milk pricing system with little cost or no consideration for what it cost to produce 100 lbs. of fresh wholesome and nutritious milk.

Last week cheese price in Europe was $1.94 per lb., at the CME in Chicago the price was $1.60 per lb and that is used to formulate farm pay price through a flawed pricing formula, a pure case of tail wagging the dog.

Every safety net ever installed to safeguard dairy producers well- being had a large hole through which producers fell by the wayside. Since the loss of parity pricing in 1981 more than 300,000 producers have been idled due to economic strangulation. The most recent safety net Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) paid about 20% of the income loss versus cost of production as calculated by ERS division of USDA – your government!

Solution, pay producers on up to 3 million pounds of production at the published cost of production, [redacted], I mean a positive economic benefit would result. Currently I see no reason to celebrate dairy production in Chenango County. The demand for milk has never been greater than the present. Chobani should have been great for Chenango County but for the STUPID pricing formula we have lost at least another 10 farms in the past 2 years due to outrageous farm gate price.

On a completely unrelated note, why does Egypt need 200 tanks and 20 F-16 jet fighter planes? Could this be for target practice for Israeli fighter pilots?

May God Bless America

Yours in Milk

Ken Dibbell

Organic milk production costs and returns per hundredweight (cwt) sold, by State, 2010 1/

Item	Indiana	Minnesota	New York	Ohio	Pennsylvania	Vermont	Wisconsin	All States
				dollars per cwt sold				
Gross value of production:								
Milk sold	25.17	24.29	28.37	25.97	27.90	28.90	24.72	26.59
Cattle	1.24	1.95	1.00	1.60	1.74	1.00	1.40	1.41
Other income 2/	1.40	0.98	1.55	1.04	1.25	0.88	1.09	1.11
Total, gross value of production	27.81	27.22	30.92	28.61	30.89	30.78	27.21	29.11
Operating costs:								
Feed--								
Purchased feed	6.01	3.24	4.99	4.27	7.62	8.59	4.11	7.08
Homegrown harvested feed	7.25	7.49	7.89	10.90	6.38	6.61	11.03	7.36
Grazed feed	0.75	0.85	1.17	0.71	0.75	0.94	0.86	0.80
Total, feed costs	14.01	11.58	14.05	15.88	14.75	16.14	16.00	15.24
Other--								
Veterinary and medicine	0.49	0.62	0.51	0.57	0.80	0.72	0.65	0.68
Bedding and litter	0.47	0.52	0.44	0.50	0.58	0.85	0.70	0.59
Marketing	0.25	0.39	0.23	0.23	0.19	0.39	0.26	0.25
Custom services	0.60	0.68	0.41	0.45	0.93	0.52	0.37	0.50
Fuel, lube, and electricity	1.20	1.24	1.44	1.32	1.09	1.89	1.23	1.20
Repairs	0.65	1.19	1.55	1.96	1.30	1.84	1.16	1.33
Other operating costs 3/	0.20	0.15	0.16	0.12	0.19	0.11	0.16	0.12
Interest on operating capital	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Total, operating cost	17.89	16.39	18.81	21.05	19.85	22.48	20.55	19.93
Allocated overhead:								
Hired labor	0.11	1.91	2.46	0.97	1.30	2.31	2.21	2.60
Opportunity cost of unpaid labor	15.62	7.53	8.30	7.94	10.61	8.89	8.39	6.65
Capital recovery of machinery and equipment 4/	4.85	6.90	7.43	12.29	7.67	9.36	7.09	6.71
Opportunity cost of land (rental rate)	0.33	0.09	0.12	0.15	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.10
Taxes and insurance	0.21	0.47	0.56	0.24	0.19	0.55	0.48	0.37
General farm overhead	0.87	1.20	1.65	0.86	1.25	1.79	1.47	1.17
Total, allocated overhead	21.99	18.10	20.52	22.45	21.15	23.02	19.76	17.60
Total costs listed	39.88	34.49	39.33	43.50	41.00	45.50	40.31	37.53
Value of production less total costs listed	-12.07	-7.27	-8.41	-14.89	-10.11	-14.72	-13.10	-8.42
Value of production less operating costs	9.92	10.83	12.11	7.56	11.04	8.30	6.66	9.18
Supporting information:								
Milk cows (head per farm)	36	73	72	60	56	63	62	77
Output per cow (pounds)	10,542	12,880	12,247	12,145	12,940	12,904	13,888	13,884
Milking frequency more than twice per day (percent of farm	0.00	0.00	2.14	0.00	1.07	1.51	0.91	1.15
Milk cows injected with bST (head per farm)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Organic milk sold (percent of sales)	100.00	99.98	100.00	100.00	99.88	100.00	100.00	99.99

← 3 Major producer States In Fed. order #1.

1/ Developed from the 2010 Agricultural Resource Management Survey of dairy operations. The sample of organic dairies included farms in the States shown plus California, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. Organic milk production costs exclude costs incurred during the transition to organic production.

2/ Income from renting or leasing dairy stock to other operations; renting space to other dairy operations; co-op patronage dividends associated with the dairy; assessment rebates, refunds, and other dairy-related resources; and the fertilizer value of manure production.

3/ Costs for third party organic certification.

4/ Machinery and equipment, and housing, manure handling, and feed storage structures, and dairy breeding herd.

Milk production costs and returns per hundredweight sold, by size group, 2013 1/

Item	Fewer than 50 cows	50-99 cows	100-199 cows	200-499 cows	500-999 cows	1,000 cows or more	All Sizes
				dollars per cwt sold			
Gross value of production:							
Milk sold	21.38	21.15	20.76	20.64	20.02	18.86	19.88
Cattle	2.35	1.97	1.70	1.49	1.55	1.45	1.60
Other income 2/	1.13	1.08	0.95	0.94	0.87	0.82	0.90
Total, gross value of production	24.86	24.20	23.41	23.07	22.44	21.13	22.38
Operating costs:							
Feed–							
Purchased feed	8.49	7.85	8.22	9.65	10.00	10.12	9.48
Homegrown harvested feed	12.29	11.25	9.84	7.96	5.56	3.26	6.33
Grazed feed	0.53	0.25	0.15	0.12	0.02	0.02	0.10
Total, feed costs	21.31	19.35	18.21	17.73	15.58	13.40	15.91
Other–							
Veterinary and medicine	0.83	0.92	0.82	0.96	0.94	0.67	0.80
Bedding and litter	0.41	0.39	0.34	0.32	0.30	0.12	0.24
Marketing	0.25	0.22	0.23	0.24	0.29	0.22	0.23
Custom services	0.64	0.62	0.65	0.71	0.70	0.41	0.56
Fuel, lube, and electricity	1.35	1.22	1.01	0.99	0.74	0.58	0.82
Repairs	1.09	1.02	0.72	0.71	0.42	0.43	0.60
Other operating costs 4/	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest on operating capital	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Total, operating cost	25.92	23.76	21.99	21.67	18.98	15.84	19.17
Allocated overhead:							
Hired labor	0.60	0.93	1.35	2.02	2.02	1.60	1.58
Opportunity cost of unpaid labor	14.29	7.38	3.66	1.55	0.54	0.17	2.22
Capital recovery of machinery and equipment 4/	8.48	6.88	4.87	3.88	2.69	2.12	3.57
Opportunity cost of land (rental rate)	0.12	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.02
Taxes and insurance	0.35	0.33	0.26	0.24	0.17	0.10	0.19
General farm overhead	1.08	0.97	0.78	0.73	0.46	0.44	0.61
Total, allocated overhead	24.92	16.55	10.96	8.44	5.89	4.43	8.19
Total costs listed	50.84	40.31	32.95	30.11	24.87	20.27	27.36
Value of production less total costs listed	-25.98	-16.11	-9.54	-7.04	-2.43	0.86	-4.98
Value of production less operating costs	-1.06	0.44	1.42	1.40	3.46	5.29	3.21
Supporting information:							
Milk cows (head per farm)	33	68	135	312	698	2,260	183
Output per cow (pounds)	15,365	17,137	18,927	19,842	22,579	23,016	20,724
Milking frequency more than twice per day (percent of farms)	2.09	2.59	8.54	30.58	59.66	55.39	9.73
Milk cows receiving bST (percent of cows)	1.98	3.34	5.34	11.98	21.82	6.85	8.79
Organic milk sold (percent of sales)	10.61	5.65	3.65	2.62	0.58	1.88	2.77

1/ Developed from survey base year, 2010.

2/ Income from renting or leasing dairy stock to other operations; renting space to other dairy operations; co-op patronage dividends associated with the dairy; assessment rebates, refunds, and other dairy-related resources; and the fertilizer value of manure production.

3/ Costs for third party organic certification

4/ Machinery and equipment, housing, manure handling, feed storage structures, and the dairy breeding herd.

IT is not unLawfull
To have Fewer than
50 cows or 100 cows

The New York Times

THE NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIALS/LETTERS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 1991

Why Don't Consumers See Lower Milk Prices?

To the Editor:

"Milking Poor Families" (editorial, March 21) is ill informed and shortsighted. Three points:

(1) Dairy farmers have seen more than a 25 percent decline in the price they receive for their milk over the last six months. If this trend continues, thousands of family farmers will be driven off the land, fewer and larger (corporate-owned) farms will prevail, and in the long run the consumer will suffer because milk production will be controlled by a small number of producers who will be able to control the price.

(2) You state that the provision in Senator Patrick J. Leahy's amendment to the emergency appropriations bill "would raise the price of whole milk by as much as 26 cents per gallon." Says who? The retailers and the for-profit processors who are ripping off the consumer and, according to the Government Accounting Office's preliminary assessment, are price gouging. Why is it that farmers have seen a drastic reduction in the price they receive, yet there has been virtually no decrease in the price consumers pay? Why not an editorial on this rip-off?

(3) Lastly, to suggest that backers of emergency, temporary relief for dairy farmers are somehow hostile to children and low-income nutrition programs is insulting and unfounded. Check the lineup in this legislative battle to understand what is truly happening. The proponents of this dairy provision include Senators Leahy, Democrat of Vermont, and James M. Jeffords, Republican of Vermont, and most of the progressive members of the Senate. Leading the opposition were Senators Jesse Helms and Richard G. Lugar, Republicans of North Carolina and Indiana.

Check the record, and you will find out which side has consistently been on the side of children and nutrition programs and which side has supported huge cutbacks in programs that help those who are most vulnerable in our nation.

In the House of Representatives, I will be proud to support this important legislation as strongly as I can.

BERNARD SANDERS
Member of Congress, Vt., at Large
Washington, March 21, 1991

Fewer Farm Families

To the Editor:

In response to "Milking Poor Families" (editorial, March 21):

Senator Patrick J. Leahy of Vermont was trying to salvage through his emergency legislation the dairy farm families not only of Vermont, but of the whole Northeast. It was an honorable attempt to solve a very serious problem.

The only difference between poor children and poor farm children is that the poor farm children have plenty of milk to drink at a cost of only 92 cents a gallon at today's production cost. They drink a lot of milk (the finest food known to humans), and not much else is in their diet.

New York State has lost 9,000 dairy farms to the system in the last 10 years. By next fall, fewer than 10,000 will remain in the state, which will idle 10,000 more people (farmers and dependents) who would like to continue working and caring for their dairy cows. But that will be impossible because of the cost of production and the farm price for the product.

Christophe Vorlet

Ten years ago we took the word "parity" out of our vocabulary, and it's been all downhill since on Northeast dairy farms. We were able all through the 1980's to improve our efficiencies of operation. We — the 10,000 remaining in New York — have survived the dairy termination program, the herd buyout, but here we are again with too much milk at too low a farm price and are about to flush the system again at the expense of many, many farm families being driven out of dairying.

The cows will not leave, as they will be absorbed by the larger farms, and the excess production will still be there. The environment will suffer further damage as we concentrate large cow numbers over less territory, and the Chesapeake Bay never will get cleaned up. We would be much better off to keep the cows spread over a larger area, continue to improve our farming practices with chemicals and manure management. Through these efforts we can (with cooperation) continue to protect the New York City watershed and even improve its quality environment.

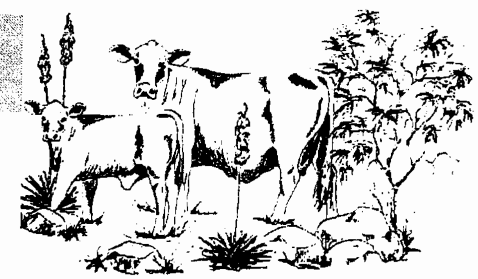
My hat is off to the other 59 senators who supported this legislation, as they realized the seriousness of the crunch at the farm level.

The cost of milk to the consumer need not have risen at all under this program. Store prices are still at a level reflecting last year's $15 to $16 farm prices. There is room in the processing and retailing sectors to have absorbed the cost of this program, improved the product through fortification with additional solids, not fats, relieved the government of the surplus problem and, who knows, maybe increased consumption of a very nutritious food product.

I shudder to think that anyone in the United States is being denied a generous portion of milk and milk products. Let's all get together and solve this problem once and for all for the benefit of all.

KEN DIBBELL
South New Berlin, N.Y.
March 22, 1991

[redacted]



7-24-06

Chairmen: House and Senate Ag. Comm. members of Congress

Gentlemen it is time for some positive and realistic decisions to be made by your committees relative to dairy farm milk pricing and so if you scan the enclosed letter I won't have to repeat all that is said there.

USDA-ERS publishes the cost of production in the northeast is on average well over \$20/CWT. Why are northeast dairy farmers only getting paid \$12/CWT? Because of a failure by Government to be present in the real world.

It is interesting to note that five northeast states have taken action to 13(?) the disgrace full farm gate price. Why do we pay all those people at USDA-ERS and salony(?), benefits, and retirement if we are not going to use the data they generate. Supply side economics has destroyed 180,000 US dairy farms since 1980. We failed to install production management after the buyout another failure out the pant this "regulated" industry. Class I milk is not a global market entity and the local manner should be allowed to support local farms. Decouple(?) Class I milk from the failed formula and allow the market to support local farms with their high taxes, expensive insurance, and outrageous energy cost.

MILC is a failure and was diluted rather than enhanced to cover energy cost—another gross error on behalf of the government.

Decouple Class I milk—price it at cost of production and index it just like congressional salaries. Take the money from the market place—not the General Fund. Also let's get things moving on the flood damage and crop loss for the farms devastated by the flood of 2006.

Sincerely,

Ken Dibbell
Member of NYFB
Member of CC Farmland Protection Comm.

P.S.

And if you would like to talk milk tax take a look at the "compact" supply management system. Tax those that continue to flood the market with ever increasing production. Tax production increase over the previous year at 10 or 20 cents/CWT to put some balance in the system and returned revenue to the general fund to replenish monies spent on air and water quality issues as a result of the "Big Farm Virus".

P.S. #2 Food sovnienty is certainly a matter of public interest. For a lot of years we feed ourselves and the growing importation of food stuffs that are not produced to our own standards are putting our citizens at risk such as Salmonella, E-Coli, West Nile Virus, Beetles from China, and the Tiger Striped Mosquito from Japan. Legislate for the people not corporate entities and brokers. Don't let the USDA (FDA) change the standards for fluid milk — please!

June 8, 2012

On Going Dairy Crisis

Once again dairy producers are being forced to throw in the towel because the U.S. Congress continues to fiddle and not to do their work.

Failure to put a $20 floor price on manufacturing milk last fall was another nail in the coffin of many farms who were still recovering from the crash of 2009.

The current MILC payment has a minor adjustment for feed cost, but nothing for fuel, fertilizer, and seed or anything made of steel, all of which are through the roof.

MILC still does not provide a course in government math on how to pay $5 in expenses with fifty cents. The cost of producing milk in 2011 was calculated to be $23.40/cwt by the USDA but now we continue to support a price discovery system based on trading at the CME – a pure case of the tail wagging the dog.

There is a bill (S-1640) that has been around since 207 submitted by Senator Casey of Pennsylvania, this bill is a common sense approach to pricing farm gate milk with supply management provisions based on the cost of production, which is different on every farm, but an average cost could be established and learn to live with it.

Dairy farming on a roller coaster pricing scale seven days a week could be viewed as cruel and unusual punishment in some circles.

With loss of parity pricing in 1981 and the roller coaster pricing policy resulting in unstable farm gate price, it became impossible for many producers to continue operating, thus their livelihood and heritage was sacrificed for what good reason?

The loss of dairy farms regionally has had a devastating effect on the local economy once supported by dairy dollars. Nearly all small businesses- feed stores, hardware and other farm service enterprises are gone.

Incidentally, Senator Casey reluctantly submitted Senate Bill 1640 but did do it after much urging by constituents, but he has since failed to support his own bill (formally the Casey Specter Bill) the only common sense proposal on the table.

All of the money to support dairy should come from the market place not from hair brained schemes that fail to sustain life on the farm. The latest being the margin insurance program at taxpayers expense for minimum coverage. Time to get off the roller coaster?

Producers are being robbed of as much as $2.70/cwt through the make allowance, a subsidy for manufacturing dairy products. Reportedly, we exported 13% of our production in 2011. Was this at a profit or would it be without the make allowance?

America's Obituary

Preface: In 1887 Alexander Tyler, a Scottish history professor at the University of Edinburgh , had this to say about the fall of the Athenian Republic some 2,000 years prior: "A democracy is always temporary in nature; it simply cannot exist as a permanent form of government. A democracy will continue to exist up until the time that voters discover that they can vote themselves generous gifts from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates who promise the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that every democracy will finally collapse over loose fiscal policy, (which is) always followed by a dictatorship."

"The average age of the world's greatest civilizations from the beginning of history, has been about 200 years. During those 200 years, these nations always progressed through the following sequence:

From bondage to spiritual faith;
From spiritual faith to great courage;
From courage to liberty;
From liberty to abundance;
From abundance to complacency;
From complacency to apathy;
From apathy to dependence;
From dependence back into bondage."

The Obituary follows: *America - Born 1776, Died 2014*

Professor Joseph Olson of Hamline University School of Law in St. Paul, Minnesota, points out some interesting facts concerning the last Presidential election:

- Number of States won by: Obama: 19 - Romney: 29
- Square miles of land won by: Obama: 580,000 - Romney: 2,427,000
- Population of counties won by: Obama: 127 million - Romney: 143 million
- Murder rate per 100,000 residents in counties won by: Obama: 13.2 Romney: 2.1

Professor Olson adds: "In aggregate, the map of the territory Romney won was mostly the land owned by the taxpaying citizens of the country. Obama territory mostly encompassed those citizens living in low-income tenements and living off various forms of government welfare..."

Olson believes the United States is now somewhere between the "complacency and apathy" phase of Professor Tyler's definition of democracy, with some 45% of the nation's population already having reached the "governmental dependency" phase.

If Congress grants amnesty and citizenship to twenty million criminal invaders called *illegals* - and they vote - then we can say goodbye to the USA in fewer than five years.

Please, please pass this along to everyone you know to help them realize just how much is at stake, knowing that apathy is the greatest danger to our freedom.

NFFC National Family Farm Coalition

110 Maryland Avenue, NE Suite 307 • Washington, DC 20002 • (202) 543-5675 • Fax (202) 543 0978 • nffc@nffc.net • www.nffc.net

August 3, 2011

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

We write on behalf of our dairy farmer members who are struggling to stay on their farms in the midst of volatile prices and oppressive heat. While we know that you cannot control the weather, you *can* change policy so that it works for our nation's family dairy farmers. The past three years have been a devastating roller coaster that is costing many of our farmers their livelihoods and farms and taking a toll on their rural communities. Crisis hotlines have been at record levels as have the level of farm bankruptcies and auctions – all signaling that something is seriously wrong.

Since June 2011, there have been new legislative proposals. The House Agriculture Committee signaled a need to move forward before the farm bill and the Senate Agriculture Committee stated that there will be no action as there is no consensus among the dairy "industry."

There *is* consensus among dairy farmers that they want a different pricing system. The lack of consensus is among the marketers and processors whose interests are at odds with dairy farmers. The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) has just released their Foundation for the Future plan. Their competitive pricing component has the serious potential to reduce our raw milk prices even further than they have been. In addition, we oppose this plan as it creates an insurance program that would at best reduce our losses at times of extremely low prices, when we are already losing money and equity. It would adversely impact nearly 20% of the nation's dairy farmers who are Mennonite or Amish and others who cannot participate in an insurance-based program due to religious beliefs. What we need is a new pricing system that requires the processors and/or marketers to pay a fair price for the milk they purchase from dairy farmers.

We urge you to review carefully and support the provisions that are the basis of the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2011, based on S. 1645 that was introduced in the last session of Congress by Senators Specter and Casey of Pennsylvania. We have attached a summary of the proposal for your review. The components of this proposal were also submitted to the USDA's Dairy Industry Advisory Commission in November 2010 as part of their public input process.

We urge you to co-sponsor this legislation as it is the only solution that establishes a new pricing formula using the national average cost of production and is based on what dairy farmers themselves have determined is the best policy response; a solution that is based on sensible government policy. This legislation would enable farmers to earn a decent living without being dependent on a government subsidy because milk buyers would be paying a fair price that reflects dairy farmers' cost of production. It also creates a milk supply management program to ensure that the production of raw milk is aligned with the needs of the domestic market. The supply management program, if necessary, would be financed by dairy farmers themselves and is based on a pricing formula derived from the

calculations determined by the Economic Research Service (ERS) at the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). This structure would restore a realistic pricing formula that returns a fair price to all American dairy farmers. Another component to this bill is its ability to ensure that our domestic food supply will not be compromised by imported casein and milk protein concentrates that are neither counted nor taxed.

The National Family Farm Coalition represents ~~family~~ farmers across the country. We have a long history of standing up for our nation's family dairy farmers by urging fairness from Congress, the USDA and the Department of Justice. In June 2010, NFFC farmers traveled to Madison, Wisconsin, to voice our concerns to the USDA and the Department of Justice on the need for immediate antitrust enforcement to ensure our nation's family dairy farmers have a fair chance to compete with corporate interests holding far too much control over the milk pricing system.

The loss of dairy farms is staggering. We are now down to 50,000 licensed dairy farms from 57,000 just two years ago. We need you to take action now to stem the devastating losses occurring daily. Supporting the Federal Milk Market Improvement Act is the answer to the dairy farmer's financial problems.

Sincerely,

Ben F. Burkett

Ben Burkett
NFFC President

Paul A. Rozwadowski

Paul Rozwadowski
Wisconsin farmer, Dairy Subcommittee Chair

The National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC), founded in 1986, unites and strengthens the voices and actions of its diverse grassroots members to demand viable livelihoods for family farmers, safe and healthy food for everyone, and economically and environmentally sound rural communities. For further information about the organization, call 1-800-639-3276 or visit www.nffc.net.

Chairperson Stabenow
Senate Ag Committee

Ms. Stabenow:

I am concerned for the lack of interest for the US Congress to stop the massacre of Dairy Farms because we refuse to pay them anything resembling the cost of the product. FFTF is not an answer. Senate Bill 1645 is the answer at no cost to the government.

A $20/CWT Floor price on MFG. milk would temper this pending crisis, but congress doesn't have the will.

Canceling the make allowance would be some relief

Another wave of Farm Auctions is already in progress. It is time for some responsible action by the congress.

Farmers can not pay $25 in expenses with anything less than $22 net. I was at the hearing in Saranac Lake.

Please respond to this statement.

Sincerely, Ken

Ken Dibbell,

Chairman Lucas
House Ag Committee

Mr Lucas:

I am concerned for the lack of interest for the US Congress to stop the massacre of Dairy Farms because we refuse to pay them anything resembling the cost of the product. FFTF is not an answer. Senate Bill 1645 is the answer at no cost to the government.

A \$20/CWT Floor price on MFG. milk would temper this pending crisis, but congress doesn't have the will.

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Please respond to this statement.

Sincerely, Ken

Ken Dibbell,

6495234

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 2968-S, STOP 0225
Washington, DC 20250-0225

September 30, 2010

Mr. Ken Dibbell
311 Country Road 28
South New Berlin, New York 13843

Dear Mr. Dibbell:

Thank you for your letter to Mary McNeil, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. As indicated in the response from Mr. Carl Martin Ruiz, your complaint has been referred to USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service since it is related to an Agency program policy or procedural issue. I have been asked to respond to your concerns.

In your letter you included a copy of a letter addressed to President Obama dated July 9, 2010. You raised several issued with the President that you previously brought to his and Secretary Vilsack's attention in late 2009 regarding the economic situation of the US dairy industry. I want to assure you that the President and Secretary Vilsack are aware of your concerns and the price difficulties that US dairy farmers endured during 2009. In responding to your previous letters, I provided information regarding several actions the Secretary completed to assist the dairy industry including temporary increases in the dairy product price support levels, Milk Income Loss Contract payments, direct payment assistance, and several food nutrition purchases. In addition, I provided information regarding the Federal milk marketing order program.

In your recent letter to Ms. McNeil, you indicate concern regarding the current method used for minimum prices, the establishment in the Federal milk marketing order program. You support the use of the Economic Research Service's cost of production data as a basis for determining the Federal milk marketing order minimum price. As you know, the current Federal order minimum prices are determined through product price formulas. The minimum price formulas were established through a public rulemaking process that involved extensive public participation.

The industry is currently discussing ways to change how the minimum prices are established. These discussions are focused primarily on developing a competitive pay price. Of course, Senate bills 889 and 1645 would replace the current formulas with a cost of production calculation.

Secretary Vilsack is committed to reviewing dairy policy as was demonstrated by the creation and implementation of the Dairy Industry Advisory Committee. Since I last wrote to you, 17 diverse members were appointed to address the issues of dairy farmer profitability and price volatility. Committee members represent small and large organic and conventional farms from across the United States, small and large processors, retailers, State governments, and academia. The Committee has held three public meetings and will hold the next meeting October 12-13, 2010, in Washington, D.C. Minutes of these meetings and a public comment tool are available at

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/diac. The Secretary has requested a report from the committee by March 2011. The meetings are open to the public and allow time for public comments.

In the meantime, prices have improved from the 2009 levels. Rising world demand for dairy products , both internationally and in the United States, have generated increases in milk prices. USDA projects the all-milk price to average between $16.25 - $16.45 per hundredweight for 2010 and $15.85 - $16.85 per hundredweight for 2011. (World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, September 10, 2010, found at http://www.usda.gov/oce/commodity/wasde/latest.pdf.

Thank you for expressing your concerns.

Sincerely,

/s/ Dana H. Coale

Dana H. Coale
Deputy Administrator
Dairy Programs

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 2968-S, STOP 0225
Washington, DC 20250-0225

March 5, 2012

Mr. Ken Dibbell
311 County Road 28
South New Berlin, New York 13843

Dear Mr. Dibbell:

Thank you for your February 2, 2012, letter faxed to Secretary Tom Vilsack concerning the situation faced by dairy farmers in the United States. Your letter was forwarded to me for response. I appreciate the opportunity to respond and share concerns regarding the strength of our nation's dairy industry.

Although the average all-milk price for 2011 was higher than the 2010 average, higher input costs--primarily for feed--resulted in below average net returns for dairy farmers. In 2012, the average all-milk price is expected to be lower while feed costs remain high. As a result, dairy farmers remain concerned about their future.

Secretary Vilsack is strongly committed to the viability of the dairy industry and is concerned about milk price volatility and dairy farmer profitability. As you know, in 2010, he appointed a 17-member Dairy Industry Advisory Committee (DIAC) to review these exact issues. These topics are complex and effective solutions are difficult to achieve. Your input into the committee deliberation process during their October 2010 meeting was highly valued and was important for the committee to see, first hand, your commitment to the industry. The DIAC final report was issued in March 2011 and contained 23 recommendations. The report is available at http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/diac_final_rpt_0302.pdf. Since the committee was not given any constraints regarding development of their recommendations, over half of the proposals either request new or increased funding levels or need additional legislative authority. Of the remaining recommendations, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has completed five, provided technical assistance as Congress considers policies related to three of the proposals, and is continuing to review the remaining proposals.

In your letter, you state that legislation regarding the dairy industry should be "stand alone" rather than included in the upcoming Farm Bill. During 2011 it appeared that dairy policy might have moved independent of the 2012 Farm Bill. We here at USDA provided technical assistance to Congress as they developed various legislative drafts. However, 2011 ended without passing a new dairy title for the Farm Bill. While I appreciate your desire to have action on dairy policy timely, the scheduling and organization is the responsibility of Congress.

You advocate for a minimum price of $20 per hundredweight for milk used for manufacturing purposes in the U.S. While this may provide temporary relief to dairy farmers, this could result in unintended consequences for America's rural economy. Raising minimum milk prices above the market value for milk used to produce dairy products may result in handlers reducing the quantity of milk that they buy from dairy farmers. This could disrupt the delicate balance between milk supply and demand and harm the long-term viability of dairy farming. As you heard in Secretary Vilsack's charge to the DIAC, the goal is to focus on policy options that minimize volatility and increase farm profitability. Both goals are important and need to work together. Sparing one in the short term at the expense of the other needs to be weighed and balanced carefully. Providing additional dollars would be extremely difficult given the current tight Federal budget situation.

In addition, we are concerned that setting minimum milk prices at a relatively high level when compared to dairy product prices could have negative consequences for dairy trade. Additional Federal income support for dairy farmers could result in challenges brought by our trading partners through the World Trade Organization thus endangering dairy exports. In 2011, exports were 4.8 percent of milk marketings on a milk-equivalent milkfat basis and 17.3 percent on a milk-equivalent skim solids basis.

Thank you for expressing your support of Senate Bill 1640 sponsored by Senator Robert Casey of Pennsylvania. At this time, USDA has not taken a position on this legislation.

Please be assured that Secretary Vilsack and I share your concern regarding the situation faced by farmers in rural America. We look forward to your continued support in working together to help our nation's dairy farm families.

Sincerely,

Dana H. Coale
Deputy Administrator
Dairy Programs

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2011

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to express our concern regarding the proposed Code 590 Nutrient Management Standard of the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). We value environmental stewardship and responsible nutrient management practices, but we nonetheless believe that this particular standard would have detrimental effects on farmers and the agriculture sector in our districts.

As you know, the proposed Code 590 Nutrient Management Standard would ban the application of nutrients to frozen ground during winter months. This manure spreading ban would be especially problematic for farmers in Upstate New York as it would require farms to construct costly storage capacity. Additionally, a winter spreading ban could pose environment challenges during other seasons since the same volume of nutrients would have to be applied to the same land in a shorter time period.

We would respectfully suggest that the proposed Code 590 Nutrient Management Standard be revised to account for the unique climates and demands of farmers in cold-weather areas such as our districts.

NRCS should take into account successful and proven state agricultural conservation programs before determining if new federal requirements are needed. Federal mandates seeking correction of a problem by broad-based mandate may result in wasted allocation of resources by farmers, taxpayers and government agencies rather than improved farm management and environmental enhancement. NRCS Practice Standards should continue to focus on practical, science-based approaches that do not place undue burdens on farm families.

Thank you for your personal attention to this matter of serious importance to our constituents.

Warm Regards,

Richard Hanna	NY29	CPG
RICHARD HANNA	TOM REED	CHRIS GIBSON
U.S. Representative	U.S. Representative	U.S. Representative

cc: Mr. David White, Natural Resources Conservation Service Chief
U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Representative Bill Owens

Kenneth A. Dibbell
Rainbow Street
South, New Berlin New York

Secretary Vilsac
Washington DC

Mr. Secretary:

I feel compelled once again to write you about an impending disaster in the dairy industry.

The current and past pricing system has been an ongoing disaster for the past thirty years and it is primed to once again crash the farm gate price of milk. We have had a few months of breakeven pay price, but still have not recovered from 2009 and 2010 pricing disasters.

Rural America cannot afford to lose anymore dairy farms and the jobs that they support in the small business community. There is currently a move on to floor the price of manufacturing milk at twenty dollars per hundred weight which would make it possible for the small farm community to continue to support the local economy. Dairy farmers cannot continue to produce milk at prices well below the cost of production.

Your support for this proposal would certainly be appreciated and you could help make it happen if you so desired.

Dairy should be separated out of the "Farm Bill" to stand alone. Dairying is seven days a week three hundred sixty-five days a year, year in and year out, whereas nearly all other agricultural production is seasonal.

Northeast Dairy Farms are face with a shortage of forages due to the two back to back floods Irene and Lee. Feed quality from what was harvested is lacking in nutritional content and must be supplemented with additional grain at high cost.

Farmers need this twenty dollar per hundred weight floor price to survive not to prosper! Your support for this emergency proposal and support for Senate Bill 1640to rpice milk on the cost of production would certainly be in the best interest of dairy producers and the local jobs they support in rural communities.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Dibbell

No Conscience!

It has become fairly obvious that there is no conscience evident in our nation's capital.
This conclusion has been fortified by a recent one day visit to D.C. There is also evidence that no amount of common sense exists in our nation's capital.

The decimation of the family dairy farm community due to a failed and totally flawecd farm gate milk pricing formula administered by the USDA is the cause of this outrageous destruction of farm family livelihood and family structure.

First of all we need to recognize that this system has idled 4/5ths of the dairy farms in existence in 1981 because of economic strangulation. 450,000 vs. today 52,000, a direct result of the collective incompetence evident in our nation's capital. The rural economy that was supported by these farms is a total shambles –feed-fuel – hardware and equipment dealers resulting in at least one million jobs lost. Now government thinks it is responsible for creating jobs. Government was directly responsible for the loss of a million jobs. Government should be providing an environment where business can operate without being taxed to death. What did NAFTA, GATT and the WTO do for US employment numbers? The loss of millions of jobs. It is time to stop putting profits ahead of people.

Who is responsible for this tragedy? First start with the IDFA(International Dairy Food Association) – the processors lobby and their quest for profits and their influence on the Congress. Second, National Milk Producers Federation posing as representing producers interest –They represent dairy coops who with few exceptions, over time, have evolved into the world's worst business agents. No One cares to recognize that dairy farms have had to operate below their cost most of the past 30 years.

The export market is not our friend. And we do not make a nickel off dairy exports. We charge back to the producer $2/hundred weight to manufacture product then they use more farmer money (CWT) to bribe someone else to buy the products.

There are currently several proposals floating around Washington to address low farm gate price. Only one really addresses the issue head on, and that is Senate Bill 1640 basing pay prices on the cost of production as calculated by a staff at ERS (Economic Research Section) a division of USDA. This bill has no cost to government resulting in no "subsidy."

It is a common sense approach to milk pricing and will keep most of today's farms in production, but not all many have not recovered from 2009 and 2010. Then we have had two floods in the Northeast with many, many crop losses, from which farms are far from recovered.
What we don't need is another 50 cent Band Aid with which farms cannot pay $5 in cost.

It is past time for some responsible action by the Congress and this administration.

In High Hopes

Ken

Ken Dibbell

Things to ponder:

- North American Oil Sand Vs Middle east Sand
- Term limits for congressional members
- Federal Government employee retirement –Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae in particular

Vera Dibbell

7 Guernsey St

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